

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 012715  
ORIGIN NODS-00

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66011  
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-----034697 172206Z /12  
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 012715

NODIS  
WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOL RPT MOSCOW 0753 ACTION SECSTATE 17 JAN 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T MOSCOW 0753

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PINT, UR, US  
SUBJECT: PNG OF DONALD KURSCH

REF: STATE 11051

1. AS OF MIDDAY JAN. 17, THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER  
SOVIET WORD HERE ON KURSCH CASE. DAS LUERS AND  
CHARGE CALLED ON KORNIYENKO FOR ONE-HOUR CONVERSATION  
JAN. 16, BUT QUESTION DID NOT ARISE.

2. REGARDING DOBRYNIN'S ARGUMENT (PARA ONE REFTTEL)  
THAT SOVIETS HAVE NO ADVANTAGE IN NUMBERS OF TRADE  
OFFICIALS, ASSUME IT WAS MADE CLEAR TO HIM THAT U.S.

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BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW ARE COUNTERPARTS OF AMTORG,  
KAMA PURCHASING COMMISSION, AEROFLOT AND INTOURISTS, AND  
NOT OF SOVIET TRADE REPRESENTATION IN WASHINGTON.  
ONLY COUNTERPART TO LATTER IS U.S. COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN  
MOSCOW, AS IS MADE CLEAR BY SHULTZ-PATOLICHEV PROTOCOL  
OF 1973.

3. DURING SOCIAL FUNCTIONS YESTERDAY BOTH FARRAND AND KURSCH WERE QUESTIONED BY WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE REGARDING SIZE, RANK AND DIPLOMATIC STATUS OF U.S. COMMERCIAL OFFICE. THIS CONCEIVABLY MAY INDICATE THAT MFT HAS BEEN APPRISED OF SITUATION AND IS REVIEWING IMPLICATIONS FOR THEIR OPERATIONS IN WASHINGTON.

4. GIVEN FACT THAT WE MAY RECEIVE ORDER FOR KURSCH'S IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE, WE HAVE MADE FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY PLANS SUBJECT TO DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL. IF KURSCH IS IN FACT ORDERED TO LEAVE, WE WOULD SEND HIM TO FRANKFURT UNDER POST-FIRE E&E AUTHORITY. THIS WOULD ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN FORMALLY A MEMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF UNTIL ONWARD ASSIGNMENT IS IDENTIFIED. ONE FACTOR IN HIS PERSONAL SITUATION IS THAT HE MUST REMAIN OVERSEAS UNTIL THE END OF FEBRUARY BEFORE HE WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR HOME LEAVE. HE IS WILLING TO ACCEPT DIRECT TRANSFER TO ANOTHER OVERSEAS POST OR TRANSFER TO DEPARTMENT BUT IN CASE OF LATTER, WOULD PREFER TO REMAIN OVERSEAS UNTIL ELIGIBLE FOR HOME LEAVE. IF HE LEAVES MOSCOW, HIS FAMILY WOULD WISH TO ACCOMPANY HIM, LEAVING SUPERVISION OF HHE PACKING TO FRIENDS AT EMBASSY.

5. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT BEFORE, IF KURSCH MUST LEAVE, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CONCEAL THE FACT. IF HIS DEPARTURE SHOULD OCCUR THIS WEEK, IT WILL BE PARTICULARLY OBVIOUS SINCE  
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HE IS THE PRINCIPAL ACTION OFFICER RUNNING THE USCO "GRAFIKA 78," EXHIBIT, WHICH INVOLVES 13 U.S. FIRMS. ALSO, CHARGE IS SCHEDULED FOR REGULAR BACKGROUND PRESS BRIEFING OF U.S. CORRESPONDENTS ON JAN. 20. IF KURSCH HAS DEPARTED BY THEN, QUESTIONS WILL BE INEVITABLE.

6. ALTHOUGH IT IS IN NO SENSE OUR DESIRE TO STIMULATE PUBLICITY ON THIS CASE (PARA 6, STATE 4768, IF KURSCH LEAVES WE ARE GOING TO BE PUT IN A POSITION EITHER OF ATTEMPTING (WITH NO REAL HOPE OF SUCCESS) TO COVER THE MATTER UP OR OF EXPLAINING WHAT HAS HAPPENED. WE THEREFORE REQUEST APPROVAL, AS MINIMUM, OF CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: IF PRESS QUESTIONS ARE RECEIVED

--CONFIRM THAT KURSCH DEPARTED AS THE RESULT OF A SOVIET REQUEST;  
-- SAY THAT HE HAS DONE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WRONG;  
-- EXPLAIN THAT THE SOVIET ACTION WAS CLEARLY IN RETALIATION FOR U.S. EXPULSION OF A SOVIET TRADE OFFICIAL FOR CAUSE; AND  
-- STATE THAT APPROPRIATE RETALIATORY ACTION IS UNDER CONSIDERATION (OR, PREFERABLY, HAS BEEN TAKEN - IF THIS IS CASE AT THE TIME).

7. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES, WE CAN OF COURSE REFUSE TO PROVIDE NAMES OF SOVIETS INVOLVED, REFERRING QUESTION TO DEPARTMENT. WE MUST POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT NET RESULT COULD BE SERIES OF ARTICLES COVERING SEVERAL DAYS IF PRESS CORPS IN WASHINGTON CONTINUES QUESTIONS AND FURTHER FACTS ARE DRIBBLED OUT IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONING. IT SEEMS TO US FAR PREFERABLE TO PROVIDE WHOLE STORY, IN SIMPLE AND MATTER-OF-FACT FASHION. THIS COULD HARDLY BE CONSTRUED, BY ANY FAIR-MINDED OBSERVER, AS AN ATTEMPT TO STIMULATE PUBLICITY. INDEED, IT IS MORE LIKELY TO INSURE THAT THE CASE IS PUT IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE FROM THE OUTSET.

8. ACTION REQUESTED:

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A. CONFIRMATION OR ALTERATION OF CONTINGENCY  
PLAN (PARA 4);

B. CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE.U  
MATLOCK  
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**TAGS:** PINT, UR, US, (KURSCH, DONALD)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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